

**MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF  
THE ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY AND  
ENERGY CONSERVATION COMMISSION**

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

The Torrance Environmental Quality and Energy Conservation Commission convened in a regular session at 7:04 p.m. on Thursday, December 3, 2009 in the West Annex meeting room at Torrance City Hall.

**2. ROLL CALL:**

Present: Commissioners Chim, Griffiths, Reilly, Watson, and  
Chairperson McCabe.

Absent: Commissioner Gobble.

Also Present: Deputy Community Development Director Cessna,  
Senior Environmental Quality Officer Jones,  
Recycling Coordinator Alison Sherman, and  
Farmers' Market Manager Mary Lou Weiss.

**MOTION:** Commissioner Griffiths moved to grant Commissioner Gobble an excused absence for the December 3, 2009 Commission meeting. Commissioner Reilly seconded the motion; a voice vote reflected unanimous approval.

**3. SALUTE TO THE FLAG**

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Commissioner Reilly.

**4. POSTING OF THE AGENDA**

**MOTION:** Commissioner Reilly, seconded by Commissioner Watson, moved to accept and file the report of the secretary on the posting of the agenda for this meeting; a voice vote reflected unanimous approval.

**5. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE PUBLIC**

None.

**6. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**6A. MINUTES OF OCTOBER 1, 2009**

**MOTION:** Commissioner Chim moved for the approval of the October 1, 2009 meeting minutes as submitted. Commissioner Reilly seconded the motion; a voice vote reflected unanimous approval (absent Commissioner Gobble).

**7. ENVIRONMENTAL MATTERS**

**7A. GREEN PRIDE IN TORRANCE AWARD FOR TORRANCE FARMERS' MARKET FOR ELIMINATING THE USE OF STYROFOAM CONTAINERS**

Senior Environmental Quality Officer Jones introduced the item and welcomed Mary Lou Weiss, Manager of Torrance Farmers' Market.

Manager Weiss distributed cloth shopping bags and the fall 2009 "Fresh Farmer" newsletter. She was pleased to announce that Farmers' Market farmers are now using biodegradable, plastic shopping bags for the shoppers and that food vendors are also using biodegradable serving containers. She stated that vendors were given six month's notice of the policy change, that there is 100% participation, and that no one has raised prices even though the supplies cost more.

Staff presented Manager Weiss with a Green Pride in Torrance certificate, hat, and mug, and the Commission was in a brief recess for a photo opportunity.

Deputy Director Cessna announced that Green Pride in Torrance award winners will be recognized at the December 15, 2009 City Council meeting.

**7B. PRESENTATION BY ALISON SHERMAN, CITY RECYCLING COORDINATOR**

Recycling Coordinator Sherman provided an update on the City's recycling programs since her last visit. She reported that the City is now in compliance with the State requirement that all cities reduce waste by 50%. She noted that Torrance received its approval based on plans to fully implement the green waste recycling program. She stated that fee increase notices were sent out to customers last month, as required by law, with the public hearing scheduled for January 12, 2010 in Council Chambers. She stated that currently one-third of residents, or 8,000 homes, are participating in the pilot program and have a 30% diversion rate, but that they are unable to expand the program without a fee increase.

She was pleased to report that Torrance residents are incredibly responsive to recycling programs and that larger 96-gallon recycling containers are in great demand. She shared information about Torrance Unified School District's (TUSD) elimination of Styrofoam lunch trays in middle and high schools and AB32 that will mandate commercial and multi-tenant recycling by January 2011. She announced a "Brag About Your Bag" bag exchange at Albertson's grocery store on December 5, 2009 in conjunction with Los Angeles County. She discussed the construction and demolition program that averages approximately 70% recycling on City projects, noting that they are trying to simplify the program while at the same time increase requirements. She announced a used tire event in May 2010 at Toyota.

Commissioner Reilly commented that she had less green waste in summer months because she cut back on water usage and asked if the City noticed any correlation with the volume of waste the City has collected this past summer with water restrictions in place. Responding to her inquiry, Recycling Coordinator Sherman stated that there is always a reduction in green waste in summer and winter months.

In response to Chairperson McCabe's inquiry, Recycling Coordinator Sherman stated that the City's green waste is being used more for composting and less for landfill alternative daily cover.

Chairperson McCabe expressed support for Torrance being at the forefront in implementing the commercial and multi-tenant recycling program sooner than will be required by the State. He also inquired what more the City could be doing to encourage TUSD recycling.

Recycling Coordinator Sherman responded that she would like to hire a consultant to assist her in conversing with TUSD regarding lunchtime recycling and composting.

A brief discussion centered on assigning adjunct duties to specific teachers each year and the importance of institutionalizing it.

In response to Chairperson McCabe's inquiries, Recycling Coordinator Sherman explained how construction and demotion recycling contributes to the City's diversion rate. She noted that the vast majority comes from the commercial sector that includes construction and demolition, with residential less than one-fifth of all waste that comes out of the City.

Recycling Coordinator Sherman described the enormous difficulties in Los Angeles County of the accounting of trash and determining what municipality it really comes from.

Commissioner Watson discussed salvage operations of older homes.

Chairperson McCabe suggested setting targets in the future for higher percentages and asked Recycling Coordinator Sherman to come back with specifics recommendations on how the Commission can help with recycling efforts.

## **8. INFORMATION ITEMS**

### **8A. UPCOMING COMMISSION ITEMS**

Deputy Director Cessna informed Commissioners that Heidi from South Bay Environmental Services Center will be at the January 7, 2010 Commission meeting to discuss the City's carbon footprint report. She stated that Commissioners should expect a new Commissioner, the RV habitation issue, and Environmental Fair planning at the February 2010 Commission meeting. She announced a Proclamation for "A Day Without a Bag," the Commission's Annual Report, and recognition of the City Yard Open House coloring contest winners and Green Pride in Torrance award winners at the December 15, 2009 City Council meeting.

## **9. ORAL COMMUNICATION**

**9A.** Commissioner Griffiths wished everyone a stress-free holiday season.

**9B.** Commissioner Chim stated that she enjoyed attending the grand opening of the Miyako Hybrid Hotel on December 2, 2009, adding that it is the first LEED certified hotel in the South Bay.

**9C.** Commissioner Chim announced that she will be a guest performer in the South Bay Ballet Company's "Nutcracker" on December 19-20, 2009 at El Camino College.

**9D.** Commissioner Watson shared information about recycling of restaurant oil and grease for bio-fuel in the City of Santa Monica.

**9E.** Chairperson McCabe requested that gardening noise be placed on a future agenda.

**9F.** Chairperson McCabe suggested that Commissioners take five minutes to get to know each other. Commissioners and staff broke into pairs for a few minutes and then took turns discussing what they learned about each other.

**10. ADJOURNMENT**

**MOTION:** At 8:37 p.m., Commissioner Watson moved to adjourn the meeting to January 7, 2010 at 7:00 p.m. in the West Annex meeting room. Commissioner Reilly seconded the motion and, hearing no objection, Chairperson McCabe so ordered.

Approved as Amended January 7, 2010 s/ Sue Herbers, City Clerk
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